

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BELGRA 06884 112059Z

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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2798

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NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: XW, YO

SUBJECT: CONSULTATIONS ON OGADEN PEACE INITIATIVE

REF: SECTO 10061

1. WE BELIEVE THE YUGOSLAVS MAY INDEED BE OF SOME ASSISTANCE ON THE OGADEN INITIATIVE AND THUS THINK IT DESIRABLE THAT WE AT LEAST RAISE THE SUBJECT WITH THEM.

2. IN SO DOING, HOWEVER, WE OUGHT TO BEAR IN MIND THE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS. WE AND THE YUGOSLAVS IT WOULD SEEM, SHARE AN INTEREST IN THE ATTAINMENT OF A CEASEFIRE IN THE OGADEN AND A RESOLUTION OF THE AREA'S UNDERLYING PROBLEMS IN A MANNER THAT DOES NOT CONSTITUTE THE INTERNATIONAL SANCTIONING OF A FORCIBLE CHANGE IN THE ETHIOPIAN/SOMALI BOUNDARY. OUR INTERESTS CLEARLY DIVERGE, HOWEVER, ON THE QUESTION OF THE POST-CONFLICT GEO-POLITICAL BALANCE IN THE HORN OUR PEACESEEKING EFFORTS OUGHT TO SEEK TO PROMOTE. THE YUGOSLAVS SEE SUPER POWER MACHINATIONS AS THE ORIGINAL CAUSITIVE FACTOR IN THE CURRENT CONFLICT IN THE OGADEN AND OPTIMALLY WOULD LIKE TO SEE A REDUCTION IN BOTH U.S. AND SOVIET INFLUCNCE IN THE AREA TO A NEGLIGIBLE LEVEL. THE YUGOSLAVS COULD, HOWEVER, PRIMARILY FOR IDEOLOGICAL REASONS, FAR MORE EASILY LIVE WITH A RESIDUAL SOVIET INFLUENCE IN

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 BELGRA 06884 112059Z

ADDIS AN OGADISCIO THAN THEY COULD WITH EIGHER A RETURN TO A SEBSTANTIAL U.S. PRESENCE IN ADDIS OR THE EMERGENCE OF A HIEGHTENED, THOUGH BALANCED, U.S.-SOVIET INFLUENCE IN THE AREA. YUGOSLAVS WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE SENSITIVE TO ANY "WESTERN" INITIATIVE (OR ONE INCLUDING THE SOVIETS) PERCEIVED AS EFFORT TO "PRESSURE" THE "NONALIGNED" DISPUTANTS OR TO "IMPOSE" A SETTLEMENT.

3. ON THE OTHER HAND, YUGOSLAVS MAY NOW FEEL THEMSELVES DRAWN INTO WHAT HAS THE MAKINGS OF A QUAGMIRE AS A RESULT OF THEIR OUTSPOKEN POLITICAL AND SUBSTANTIAL MATERIAL SUPPORT FOR THE DIRGUE. YUGOSLAVS HAVE ALL ALONG SEEN IN THE DIRGUE THE EMERGENCE OF ETHIOPIAN "SOCIALISM", ALBEIT ADMITTEDLY CRUDE, AS WELL AS ETHIOPIAN ADHERENCE TO "NONALIGNMENT". WHILE THEY THUS WOULD LIKELY BALK AT PARTICIPATION IN ANY INITIATIVE LIKELY TO UNDERMINE EITHER ETHIOPIAN "SOCIALISM" OR "NONALIGNMENT", ADDIS' CURRENT PLIGHT MIGHT WELL LEAD YUGOSLAVS TO BE MORE RECEPTIVE (EVEN TO "WESTERN" INITIATIVE) THAN ONE WOULD OTHERWISE ANTICIPATE. AND THE GOY WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE FLATTERED AT BEING OFFERED A PIECE OF THE ACTION.

4. WE WOULD CAUTION AGAINST OVERESTIMATING YUGOSLAVIA'S INFLUENCE WITHIN THE NONALIGNED MOVEMENT IN FACILITATING THE RESOLUTION OF A HARD, REGIONAL CONFLICT SUCH AS THAT IN THE OGADEN. BOTH IN THE HORN AND IN THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN ARENA THE YUGOSLAVS HAVE AS OFTEN AS NOT BEEN MORE CONCERNED WITH INGRATIATING THEMSELVES WITH PARTIES ENJOYING SUPPORT OF NONALIGNED AFRICAN COUNTRIES THAN THEY HAVE IN EXERCISING INFLUENCE PER SE OVER EITHER THE FAVORED PARTIES OR THEIR NONALIGNED AFRICAN SUPPORTERS.

5. AS REFTTEL SUGGESTS, GOY AT THIS POINT MAY BE LOOKING TO
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 BELGRA 06884 112059Z

UN AS POTENTIALLY EFFECTIVE ACTOR ON OGADEN, PROVIDING THAT UN INVOLVEMENT IS NOT OPPOSED BY OAU AND PROPER DEFERENCE IS PAID TO EFFORTS OF OAU MEDIATION COMMITTEE. IT MAY BE A TELLING SIGN, HOWEVER, OF SANGUINITY WITH WHICH YUGOSLAVS APPROACH PROSPECT OF UN INVOLVEMENT THAT THEY HAVE NOT CHOSEN MEANINGFULLY TO INVOLVE THE NONALIGNED MOVEMENT (AND ITS PRESTIGE) IN PEACESEEKING EFFORTS TO DATE.
EAGLEBURGER

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